

ARTS

ARTISTS PROFILE

Ruth Jensen: Painter

When did you first become serious about art?

For Christmas, I think in 1995, my husband gave me a painting course, he signed me up with Katherine Smit. I was a little shy about going, but I went and I loved it so much. It was the best present. Katherine is the best, she really makes you feel good about what you do. Since then, I have been busy going to classes and attended many workshops. As a child I always wanted to do drawings and create things. Now after kids and more time to do my own things, I really take advantage of that and enjoy it very much.

What medium do you work in? Why?

Well, I like to do it all.

My first attempt was watercolor, and I enjoyed it for a long time. Watercolor is easy to travel around with.

Then I was introduced to pastel, and that went right to my heart, I really love the feel of putting pastel on the paper, and not to mention all the vibrant colors that are around. You have to have them all. It's really an addiction.

Pastels are more cumbersome to drag around, and for traveling one can really come in some trouble with the airport security. The pastels could look like little bullets on the screens. It happened to me in Iceland once.

Lately I have enjoyed acrylic which to me is a more "free" medium. You can really go crazy with that. Also if it's not working out so well, you can let it dry and paint a new over it again.

Do you make a living as an artist?

No way! It was never my expectation to be doing that. It is fun if somebody want to buy one and it happens.

That also gives me the incentive to keep painting. My children all have a small gallery of my creation.



Artist Ruth Jensen

PHOTO/DAVID MACCAFERRI

What artists or artworks inspired you?

Emigrating from Denmark my most admired and inspiring artists are the Old Danish painters, Anna and Michael Ancher, and P.S. Krøyer. They were all around in the late 1800s and beginning of 1900. They got together and painted in the northern part of Denmark in the town of Skagen, which sits on the very tip of Denmark. The light up there is so magnificent and the landscape is so intriguing. It is a painter's paradise. I also admire Claude Monet, who doesn't? But one from this time in life stands out. His name is Desmond O'Hagan. Three years ago I went to a pastel painters convention in Albuquerque, I attended a demonstration where he was the artist. He was so inspiring.

I am also very lucky to live in this area with so many wonderful artists around.

Describe your creative process.

I find my desire to paint in everyday life. I am lucky enough to live here on the South Shore where all the time there is something to paint, just look out, and there it is!

Sometimes I will be out there in the middle of it, it's difficult to pick a subject, but when my mind has been made up, the painting usually happens pretty fast.

I start out with a little sketch trying to get a good composition. I most often take photograph to have for remembering, but my goal is not to paint another "photograph" but to get the feel of the day, the color and mood.

Now and then I am rather abstract, but I want to do a painting that tell something, something people can relate to.

When I first have decided what to paint, it usually comes pretty fast, that's so much fun when it happens.

EXTRA IN YOUR REPORTER

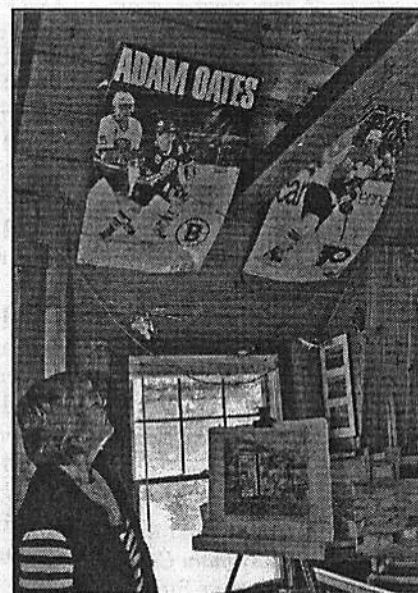
If someone is looking at one of your works, what feelings, thoughts or ideas do you want them to have?

I really feel good if I notice people stop up in front of one of my paintings, walk away, and then come back again to look some more. And if some nice remark is mentioned, then I feel I did accomplish something. It is a good feeling. I want people to feel pleased, I put a lot of feeling in my paintings, and I love colors.

Finish the following sentence. "Art is.."

Art is giving me wonderful moment and also lots of frustrations. But mostly the good feelings.

It opens your eyes for so much - things between - shadows you never saw before - shapes different than you had in mind -. I could go on - colors of water - different every day at



Ruth's studio is in what used to be her son's bedroom, which still bears two of his posters.

different times. I can't get enough of it.

I don't call myself an artist, but someone who likes to paint.

I have been lucky enough to receive several awards at shows, and some of my paintings are hanging around in private homes.

People can go see my paintings at The Russell Gallery in Plymouth, and whenever I enter a show in the towns around.

And on www.helenbumpusgallery.com